Difference between Creator and creatures

The Issue of Tawheed (Monotheism; The Oneness of Allah) and Shirk (Polytheism):

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ

(All praise is exclusively for Allah.)

Creation is a manifestation of Allah’s attributes and praises. For example, creation is a manifestation of Allah’s attribute

of being the Creator. Likewise, creation shows mercy, helps one another, listens, etc., and Allah also listens, shows mercy, and helps. Now, the real praise belongs exclusively to Allah. Creation is a manifestation of Allah's attributes, but their existence and qualities have come into being. Therefore, we need to differentiate between the Creator and the creation. This distinction is known as the issue of Tawheed (monotheism) and Shirk (polytheism).

The Barelvis (Ahle Sunnat) made this distinction by stating that Allah’s essence and attributes are inherent (ذاتی), while the attributes of creation are bestowed (عطائی).

However, this distinction is incomplete because, based on this definition, even the polytheists of Makkah would not be considered polytheists, as they also believed in Allah as the Creator and considered their deities to be

Allah’s creation (i.e., bestowed attributes). In fact, some even regarded them merely as intercessors. Yet, despite this, the Qur’an and Hadith still declared them mushrik (polytheists).

If this distinction were valid, only the Zoroastrians (who believed in two creators, one of good and one of evil) would be considered polytheists.

"And if you ask them (the polytheists), ‘Who created the

heavens and the earth?’ they will certainly say, ‘Allah.’" (Az-Zumar - 38)

There are many such verses.

Even in Sahih Muslim, it is found that they considered their deities bestowed (عطائی).

Narrated by Abbas (r.a), he said:

The polytheists used to say:

"(O Allah) We are present, You have no partner."

He said: Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would say, "Woe to you! Stop! Stop (right here)."

But they would continue saying:

"Except for one partner who is Yours, You own him, but he does not own You."

They used to say this while performing Tawaf (circumambulation) of the Kaaba.

(Sahih Muslim - 2815)

Therefore, this distinction is incomplete.

The Difference Between the Creator and the Creation:

1. Perfect vs. Limited:

Allah’s attributes are perfect, while the attributes of creation are limited.

For example, Allah’s knowledge is complete, whereas the knowledge of creation is limited.

To attribute complete knowledge of the unseen to creation is Shirk.

Predestination (Taqdeer) is a manifestation of Allah’s perfect knowledge, perfect power, grace, and justice.

The attribute "Ar-Rahman" (The Most Merciful) encompasses all creations, signifying perfection. Therefore, creation cannot be called "Ar-Rahman," and it is

prohibited to name a creation "Ar-Rahman."

Hadith:

A bird came and sat on the edge of the boat, then pecked at the sea once or twice. Seeing this, Khidr (peace be upon him) said: "O Musa! My knowledge and your knowledge combined have reduced (in comparison) to Allah's knowledge just as much as this bird has taken from the sea."

(Sahih Bukhari - 122)

2. Beyond Means vs. Dependent on Means:

Allah is not dependent on means, whereas the attributes of creation are dependent on means.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth without any precedent, and when He decrees a matter, He only says to

it, ‘Be,’ and it is." (Al-Baqarah - 117)

Prophets receive limited knowledge of the unseen through revelation (Wahi) and miracles, which are specific means.

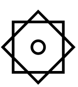
However, these means are not under the discretionary control of the Prophet.

If miracles were at the Prophet’s discretion, he would have used

them to access all knowledge, making his knowledge complete, which contradicts the first distinction (complete knowledge for creation = Shirk).

3. Independent vs. Dependent (inherent vs granted):

وَمَا تَشَآءُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ



"And you cannot will except that Allah, the Lord of the worlds, wills." (At-Takwir - 29)

Allah’s essence and attributes are inherent, eternal, and independent.

Whereas creation is not independent but rather subject to Allah’s will and decree.

Creation is not completely free in its choices.

For example:

A medicine only provides healing if Allah wills.

Creation can only help within the limits of natural means, subject to Allah’s will.

The deceased in graves are completely unaware of our calls until the Day of Judgment (Ahqaf - 5), so how can they help?

Additionally, there must be evidence proving that the deceased have some means of hearing and helping.

Allah is completely independent in His decisions and is not compelled by any intercession. He decides based on His grace and justice.

As a result, we are utterly powerless before Allah’s decrees, meaning only Allah is worthy of worship.

Note:

This third distinction also leads to the discussion of Taqdeer (predestination). I have written two previous posts about it.

Note: In the first two distinctions, the classification of Dhaati (intrinsic) and Atai (granted) is inappropriate.

The attributes of creation are neither Dhaati (intrinsic) nor Atai

(granted) in an absolute or perfect sense.

Likewise, the attributes of creation are neither Dhaati (intrinsic) nor Atai (granted) in a way that makes them Mafouq al-Asbab (beyond means and causes).

Summary: The attributes of creation are both granted and limited, and they are subject to means and causes.

Because they are limited and dependent on means, the need for evidence also arises.

The Expression of "There’s none worthy of worship but Allah"

The ways to express "La ilaha illa Allah" were revealed through angels to the Prophets (peace be

upon them) and were completed upon Muhammad (ﷺ).

Now, the Qur’an and Hadith serve as Allah’s legislative commands until the Day of Judgment and are the proper ways to express "La ilaha illa Allah."

The Qur’an itself is a miracle, and any sincere seeker of truth can study it to confirm that it is not a human creation.

Therefore, no more prophets or messengers are needed, as previous messengers performed miracles to convince people that their messages were truly from Allah.

The Qur’an and Hadith emphasize the importance of evidence in matters of faith. Self-invented methods of expressing "La ilaha illa Allah" are not acceptable to Allah.

Note:

All creation is only metaphorically attributed (اسناد مجازی) compared to Allah.

For example:

If a person helps another within natural means, this help is

metaphorical because true help comes from Allah.

Allah has already planned everything, and His decree is final.

Before seeking help from creation, one must have the correct belief that only Allah is the real Helper, and if Allah wills, creation may grant help through natural means.

Seeking help from creation is conditional upon a valid Islamic proof.

Hadith:

"Whoever does not thank people (according to Islamic teachings) does not thank Allah."

The one who helps should also thank Allah for being granted the opportunity to assist someone, as it is a favor from Allah.

Note:

The essence and attributes of Allah are beyond our imagination, and we, as creation, cannot fully comprehend the reality of Allah.

For example:

A human has an ear; this is called mabda (origin).

When a sound reaches and strikes the ear, this is called kayfiyyah (manner/process).

Awareness of the sound occurs; this is called natijah (result).

We know all three aspects regarding a human, but concerning Allah, we do not know mabda (origin) and kayfiyyah (manner/process); we only know the natijah (result), which is that

Allah is aware of our calls and voices.

We are religiously obligated to acquire the necessary knowledge of Allah—just enough to conclude, while understanding the meaning of worship, that we are utterly weak and powerless before Allah’s decisions. As a result, there is none worthy of worship except Allah. This level of knowledge of Allah is what He has approved for us. Now, the ways to express this divine knowledge, La ilaha illa

Allah, are mentioned in the Quran and Hadith, and we must express it accordingly.

It is inherent in human nature to be self-centered and greedy. A person is extremely eager for his own benefit and well-being. This nature is not inherently harmful; however, when it is combined with ignorance (neglect of recognition of Allah/polytheist), it becomes harmful. On the other hand, when Tawheed (monotheism) is included, this

very nature transforms into something beneficial. Even due to his natural disposition, a person will be compelled to turn toward Allah.

And Allah knows best.